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An Educational Magazine for Directors, Teachers, and Students of Dramatic Arts

Vol. XXXI, No. 8

MAY, 1960

50c Per Copy



Pictured above are 49 students from Wheaton High School, Glenbard High School, Downers Grove High School, all suburban schools of Chicago, Illinois, who will present the original chorologue, *Were You There?* written by Harold H. Lytle, at the Wednesday General Assembly of the Eighth National Dramatic Arts Conference at Indiana University during the week of June 19. The chorologue will be under the direction of Mr. Lytle and Mrs. Birney Lytle, Sponsor, Troupe 1022, Wheaton High School.

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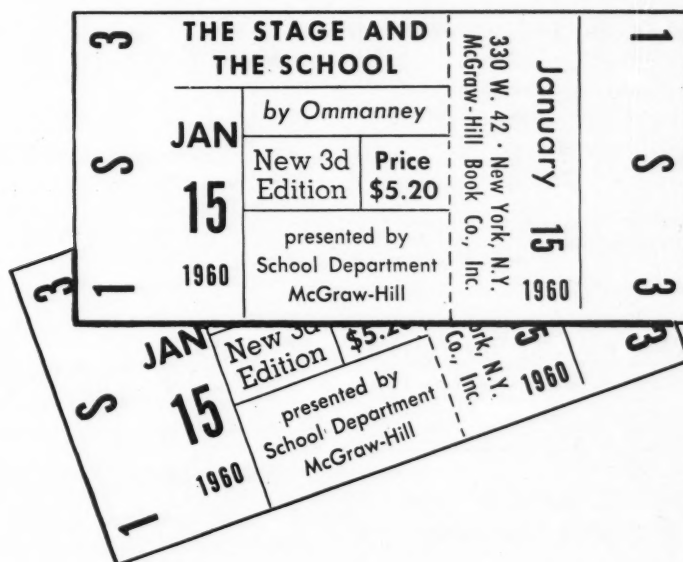
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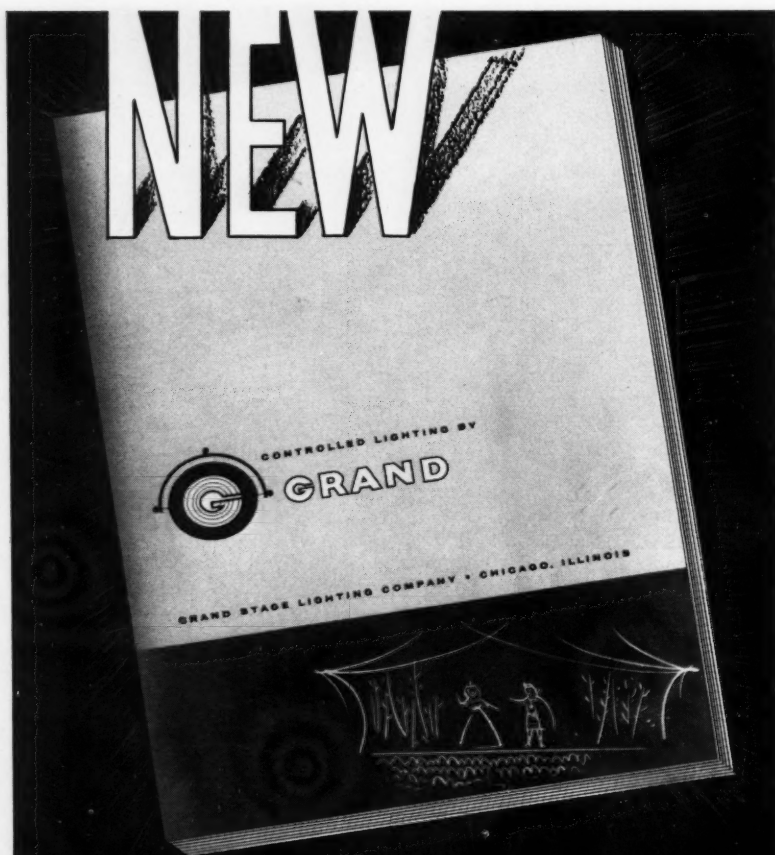
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**N**ATURALLY, our primary interest at this time is our Eighth National Dramatic Arts Conference at Indiana University, the week of June 19. As has been our custom in past conference years, several pages of the May issue have been reserved for pictures of our participating Thespian schools and other key personnel. For you who are still undecided about attending the conference, these pictures of the participating schools may help you with your decision.

— 0 —

**A**S WE come to the close of another school year of publication, we must pause to express our thanks to Prof. B. M. Hobgood, Chairman of the Drama and Speech Department at Catawba College, Salisbury, North Carolina, for his excellent series of eight articles, *Introduction to Entertainment*; to Charles R. Trumbo and Pollyann, Bartow, Florida, for their series, *Our Community Theaters*; and to Joel E. Rubin, Consultant in Theater Planning, Production and Lighting and Director, Theater Lighting Division, Kliegl Bros., Lighting, New York City, for his series of four articles on *Modern Theatrical Lighting*. Prof. Hobgood concludes with *Holidays in Music*; and Mr. Bartow, with *Little Theater of Jacksonville*.

— 0 —

**F**RIEDA Reed, Co-sponsor Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Sr. High School, concludes her Theater for Children with *Thespian Children's Theater Grows*; Dr. Earl Blank, Northeastern State College, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, *Plays of the Month*, with the following four plays: *Belles on their Toes*, *Murder in a Nunnery*, *New Boy in School*, and *Bernardine*; Prof. Willard Friederich, Brief Views, with his continuation of adult plays for high school theater. All of these department heads will continue their excellent work during the 1960-61 season.

— 0 —

**F**INALLY, although the year is just ending, your editor is planning for next year's issues. There will be two series of eight articles: *The History of the Movies*, by Dr. Delwin B. Dusenbury, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa.; and *Play Festivals*, by Dr. Paul Carmack, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Joel E. Rubin will continue his series on *Modern Theatrical Lighting* with a series of four articles. In addition we plan to present articles of pertinent and significant interest as follows: *Gangway* (musical-comedy original) by Katherine Offill; *Commedia dell' Workshop* by William E. Munns; *Theater without a Stage* by Henry Horwege; *Modern Shakespearean Productions at the Three Stratfords* by Kay E. Rinfrette; *Touring "Man and Superman"* by Joe Zender; *Go to the Audience* by Robert O. Wise, Jr.; *Stylized Acting* by William Munns; *Roots in the Hearts of the Audience* by Doris A. Paul; *Reveries* by Drucilla J. Stillwagon; and at least three *Thespians of the Month*. It all points to another exciting year of educational theater reading.

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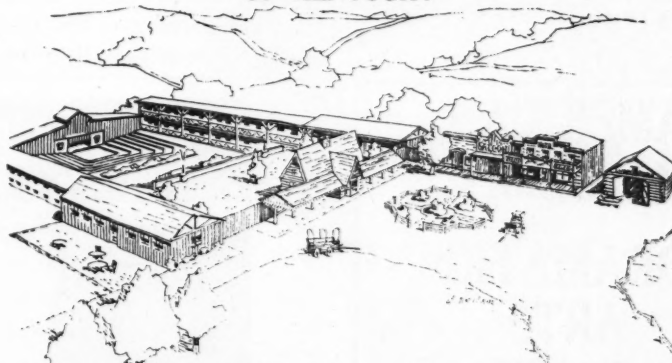
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Love," starring Pat Boone; that has a producer on three national drama boards —  
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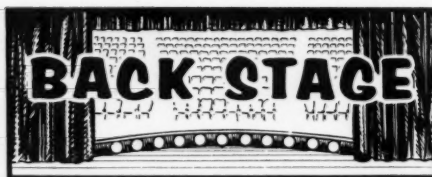
## THE 1960 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

**T**HE program for our Eighth National Dramatic Arts Conference which will be held at Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, the entire week of June 19, is now official with the exception of a few very minor details. As chairman for the past four conferences I personally feel that this year's program will top them all. The plays to be presented by our participating schools are superior, the evening performances exceptional, the speakers outstanding, and the Workshops wide in their scope of high school theater. Here indeed is a theater conference directed solely to the high schools.

For the first time in the history of our Conferences we are offering Choral reading, which will be presented at the Wednesday General Assembly; eight dramatic readings instead of four as in past years; in addition to the basic workshops, which are presented at all Conferences, new workshops on Advance Theater Techniques (Sponsors only), Dance-Pantomime, Creative Dramatics at Try-outs, Prospective Speech and Drama Teachers, and Theater Dancing. Thirteen workshops will be offered on Tuesday afternoon and then will be repeated on both Wednesday and Thursday afternoons — another innovation in scheduling the Conference program.

There will be exhibits too by nationally known publishers and manufacturers of theatrical goods; exhibits by our Thespian affiliated schools. Favors will be presented to each delegate at the conference banquet; trophies awarded to participating schools. And finally the conference pictorial program will recall pleasant memories long after the delegates have returned home.

Our goal: 1000 delegates from 40 or more states! We feel sure that it is within our reach. Let's all meet for a glorious week of high school theater on the beautiful IU campus in June!



## HIGH SCHOOL THEATER WORKSHOPS

**A** NUMBER of colleges and universities are offering this summer adequate theater workshops for sophomores, juniors, and seniors who are interested in theater. You will find most of these schools listed under our heading "Recommended Colleges, Universities, Summer Schools and Camps" starting with the February issue. Were I interested in sending a daughter or son to a summer theater program, I would consider only those recommended schools which are well known for program offered, living facilities available, and the method of supervision of all activities.

## STRATFORD-ON-AVON, ENGLAND

**P**ROF. Sawyer Falk of Syracuse University will conduct a 1960 summer course in Drama at Stratford-on-Avon, England, from August 4 to September 23. Course credits will be offered to both qualified students in both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Late summer dates were purposely chosen to take advantage of the many theatrical events in progress in England during August and September.

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## A UNIQUE PUBLICATION

**T**HE Hub Electric Company, Inc., 2249 West Grand Avenue, Chicago 12, Illinois, a pioneer in the field of special lighting and control equipment, announces a recent publication of a unique piece of technical literature: *Engineered Lighting and Control Equipment*. This 44 page publication is a comprehensive presentation and includes specification, photometric data, circuiting and dimensional information. Schools contemplating building new theaters will find this publication a valuable assist in planning lighting for the theater.

## OUR THANKS TO

**ALFRED L. Golden**, co-author with Harry Thurschwell of *A Young Man's Fancy*, states in his letter of February 15, 1960: "I was pleasantly surprised to find that our royalty returns this February are two and one-half times greater than those of February last year and about three and one-half times more than that of August 1959. We can attribute this remarkable increase to only one thing — the single ad on *A Young Man's Fancy* which was placed in *DRAMATICS* this past October."

Ken Kenison, Sponsor, Troupe 427, McLeansboro, Illinois, Township High School, writes in his letter of March 10: "I sincerely feel much of our growth is attributed to *DRAMATICS*. As the students read the magazine, they are aware of other plays that are being produced by other high schools, and are eager to work so as to produce 'top plays.'"

## NEXT ISSUE — OCTOBER

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# PICTORIAL PREVIEW:

## EIGHTH NATIONAL DRAMATIC ARTS CONFERENCE

JUNE 20 - 25

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA



Willard Friederich, Head, Dept. of Speech and Drama, Marietta, Ohio, College, Assistant Conference Chairman



Juanita Shearer, Indiana State Regional Director, Sponsor, Troupe 872, Brazil High School, Chairman of Banquet Committee and Sponsors' Teas



ANDREW DUGGAN, Guest Speaker

Mr. Duggan, a graduate of Indiana University, spent his formative theater training years with the Margo Jones' Community Players, Houston, Texas. He toured during the war the India-Burma-China area with the Melvyn Douglas' Entertainment Production Unit. He appeared in the following Broadway productions: **Dream Girl** (later on tour with Lucille Ball), **The Rose Tattoo**, **Paint Your Wagon**, **Fragile Fox**, **The Innocents**, **Gently Does It**, **Anniversary Waltz** (replaced McDonald Carey in lead role), and **Third Best Sport** (with Celeste Holm). He also played important roles in the following films: **Three Brave Men**, **Decision at Sundown**, **The Bravados**, **Patterns**, and **Westbound**.

In television, Mr. Duggan appeared in many major shows from New York and Hollywood. He played Jack Kelly in Walt Disney's **Saga of Andy Burnett**. Under contract to Warner Brothers Studio, he is currently starring in **Bourbon Street Beat**, a mystery series appearing weekly on ABC-TV.



BARBARA LOCKARD, Guest Speaker

Barbara Lockard, Indiana University Masters graduate in Music and Harmony, comes to us from New York City where she appeared this past year in the NBC-TV opera production of **Cavalleria Rusticana**, **Don Giovanni**, and **Amahl and the Night Visitors**. She also has performed with the N. Y. City Center Opera Company, both in New York and at the Brussels World Fair in 1958.

Miss Lockard opens June 24 as "Jeanie with the Light Brown Hair" in the **Stephen Foster Story** at Bardstown, Kentucky. This will be the second season Miss Lockard will play the role she created. She is not new to the I.U. Stage. As a high school student she gave a reading here at the National Thespian Conference in 1952. President of her high school Thespian Troupe 996, in West Frankfort, Illinois, she also served as president of the I.U. Chapter of Theta Alpha Phi, national dramatic honorary fraternity.





## ONE-ACT PLAYS

Cutting from **The Crucible**, Troupe 746, Englewood School for Boys, Englewood, New Jersey, Fred Hutchins, Sponsor



Cutting from **The Diary of Anne Frank**, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala., Florence Pass, Director



**The Feast of Ortolans**, Troupe 454, Brigham Young University Laboratory School, Provo, Utah, Max Golightly, Sponsor



and

## WORKSHOPS



**Moony's Kid Don't Cry**, Troupe 670, Wayne, Mich., Memorial High School, Letha Rice, Sponsor



Cutting from **Separate Tables**, Troupe 1404, Western Hills High School, Cincinnati, Ohio, Gerald Brown, Sponsor



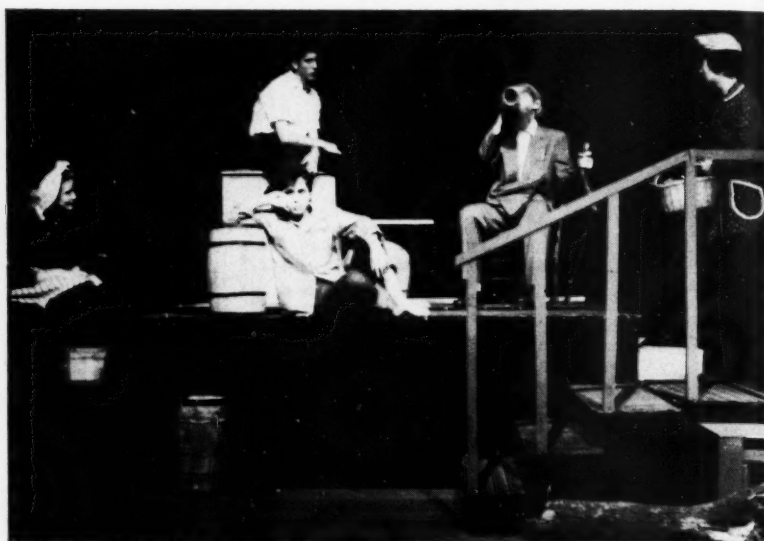
Cutting from **Lady in the Dark**, Troupe 18, Thornton Fractional Twp. High School, South Branch, Lansing, Ill., Robert J. Phillips, Sponsor



**The Princess Marries the Page**, Troupe 950, Omaha, Nebraska, North High School, Margaret A. Nielsen, Sponsor



# ONE-ACT PLAYS AND WORKSHOPS



Cutting from **My Heart's in the Highlands**, Troupe 1611, Sam Houston High School, Houston, Texas, Lela Blount, Sponsor



Workshop: **Creative Dramatics for Tryouts**, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, Ohio, Florence Hill, Sponsor



Dance Pantomime Workshop, Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Sr. High School, Frieda Reed, Maizie Weil, Co-sponsors



Sandy Aronoff, Director of Dance Pantomime Workshop



## WORKSHOPS



Children's Theater Workshop, Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Sr. High School, Frieda Reed, Maizie Weil, Co-sponsors



Publicity and Advertising Workshop, Thespian Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School, Margaret L. Meyn, Sponsor

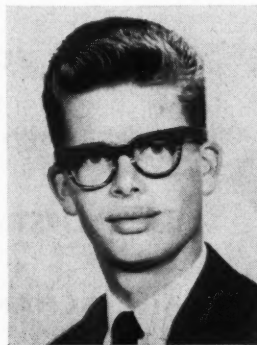


Don H. Poston  
Workshop: Film-  
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## INVOCATIONS



Jack Allen Anderson,  
Troupe 1337, Peabody High  
School, Alexandria, La.,  
Invocation



Steve Marr, Troupe 935,  
Lawton, Oklahoma, High  
School, Invocation



Sally Ann Stark, Troupe  
872, Brazil, Ind., High  
School, Invocation



Gary Gardner, Troupe 59,  
Danville, Ill., High School,  
Invocation



# **T**HE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK

**THE HAPPIEST MILLIONAIRE**

**THE GAZEBO**

**NO TIME FOR SERGEANTS**

**TALL STORY**

**VISIT TO A SMALL PLANET**

**THE MAN IN THE DOG SUIT**

**DEAR DELINQUENT**

**CLOUD SEVEN**

**A YOUNG LADY OF PROPERTY**

**THE CURIOUS SAVAGE**

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# THE RIVALRY..

BY

NORMAN CORWIN

---

Dramatists Play Service takes great pleasure in announcing the release of THE RIVALRY, which starred Nancy Kelly, Martin Gabel and Richard Boone on Broadway. Prior to its Broadway opening, the play had a highly successful extended tour across the country, with Raymond Massey as Lincoln.

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SERIES OF PLATFORMS

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"One of the few deeply satisfying evenings of the current season... living history, dramatized yet faithful to the facts." — George Oppenheimer, *Newsday*.

"Evocative, inspiring and stirring theatre, a re-creation of a chapter on the nation's chronicles that has an amazingly contemporary significance." — Lewis Funke, *N. Y. Times*.

THE RIVALRY is a dramatized presentation of the great debates that took place between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas when they were campaigning for the Senatorship from Illinois. Funke, in the *N. Y. Times* describes the play:

"The debate of 'joint discussions,' took place in seven Congressional districts and totaled thirty hours in length. They were conducted in a fever of partisanship as the nation listened and trembled. Brass bands played, the press vilified or glorified the opponents, depending on which side they took. Douglas, cocky and brisk, fought for the rights of the separate states to make their own choice on the question of slavery; Lincoln, modest, yet as brisk, fought for equality of human beings and the conviction that the nation could not endure half slave, half free. All this Mr. Corwin has tried to suggest, some-

times by interpolations, mostly by distilling and staging the high points of the arguments themselves. To hold the proceedings together he has utilized Mrs. Douglas, who accompanied her husband on the tour, as both performer and narrator. It is she who puts the whole in perspective..." There are some charming encounters between Mrs. Douglas and Lincoln, as she begins to lose her distrust for her husband's opponent, and throughout the play the personal issues, as well as the political ones, are magnificently developed.

## DRAMATISTS PLAY SERVICE, Inc.

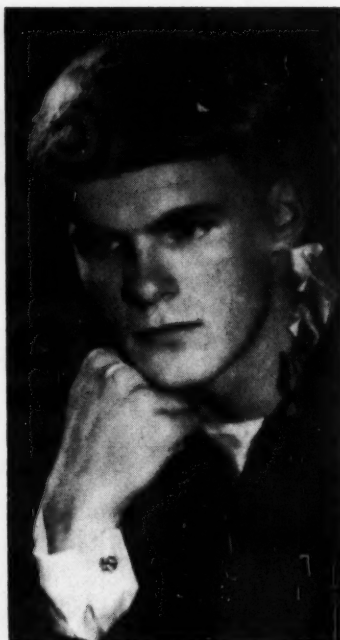
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# EVENING PERFORMANCES



Carolyn Croft as Gertrude in Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., production of **Hamlet**, directed by Dennis Holt



Sonny Setliff as Hamlet in Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., production of **Hamlet**, directed by Dennis Holt



Bettye Adney as Ophelia in Ouachita Baptist College, Arkadelphia, Ark., production of **Hamlet**, directed by Dennis Holt



National Formal Initiation will be conducted by Troupe 230, Ft. Hill High School, Cumberland, Maryland, Helen Smith, Sponsor.



**The Red Shoes**, Troupe 1000, Upper Darby, Pa., Sr. High School, Frieda Reed, Maizie Weil, Co-sponsors



# D R A M A T I C

# R E A D I N G S



Susan Kyle Reinhardt, Troupe 1757, Franklin County High School, Frankfort, Ky., Reading



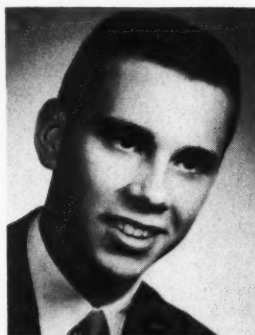
Sue Wolske, Troupe 455, Benton Harbor, Mich., High School, Reading: Cutting from *The Lark*



Karen Fraser, Troupe 518, Highland Park, Mich., High School, Reading: Cutting from *The Silver Cord*



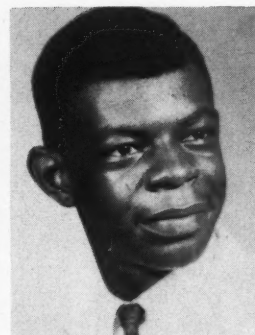
Barbara Beldon, Troupe 1984, Warren Central High School, Indianapolis, Indiana, Reading



Larry Fortney, Troupe 615, Ottumwa, Ia., High School, Reading



Jack Waddell, Troupe 1215, Hammond, Ind., Technical Vocational High School, Reading: *The Creation*

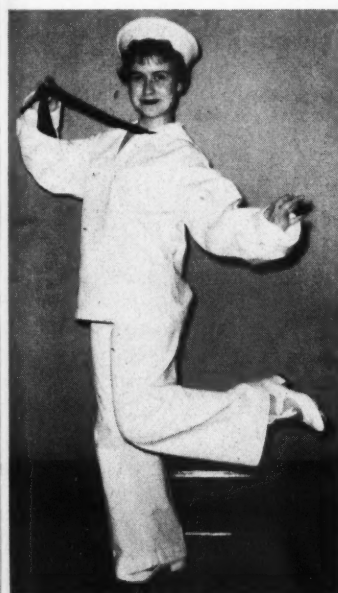


Claude Baker, Troupe 918, Middletown, Ohio, High School, Reading: *J.B.*



Mary Lee Chambers, Troupe 336, Miami, Fla., Southwest High School, Reading: Cutting from *Our Hearts Were Young and Gay*

## TRY-OUTS FOR OUR FOURTH NATIONAL VARIETY SHOW



Anne Armistead, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala., Song and Dance



Kay Arnold, Troupe 615, Ottumwa, Iowa, High School, Singer



Betty Vines, Troupe 258, Ensley High School, Birmingham, Ala., Reading



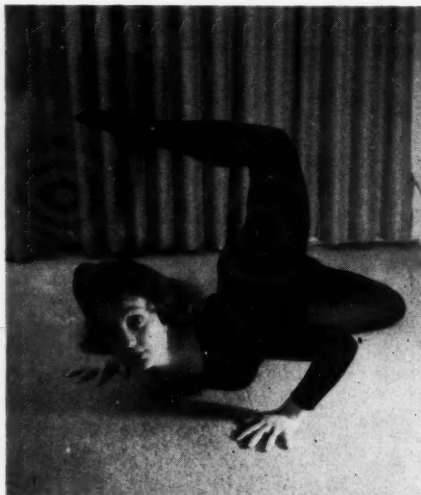
Don Hipps, Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Washington, Tap Solo



# VARIETY SHOW



Jean McWilliams, Troupe 615, Ottumwa, Iowa, High School, Dancer



Betty Lynn Jacobsen, Troupe 454, Brigham Young High School, Provo, Utah, Dance



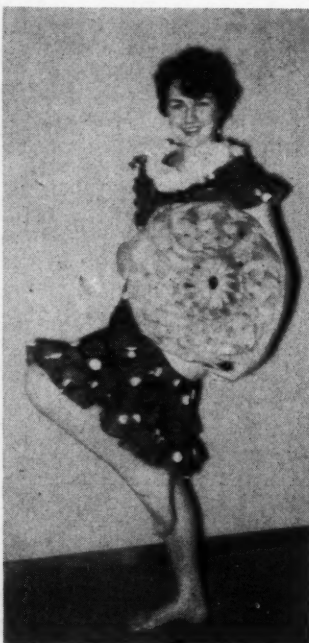
Fred Ives, Arnold Norem, Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Washington, Magic Act



Susan Leish, Barbara Eaglen, Troupe 59, Danville, Ill., High School, Dancing Duo



Jamie Sapp, Troupe 227, Bryan, Ohio, High School, Pantomime



Donna Ross, Troupe 545, South Kitsap High School, Port Orchard, Washington, Comedy Hula



Diane Black, Troupe 518, Highland Park, Mich., High School, Jazz Dance



Kathy Ward, Troupe 511, Sacred Heart Academy, Wichita, Kansas, Dancer



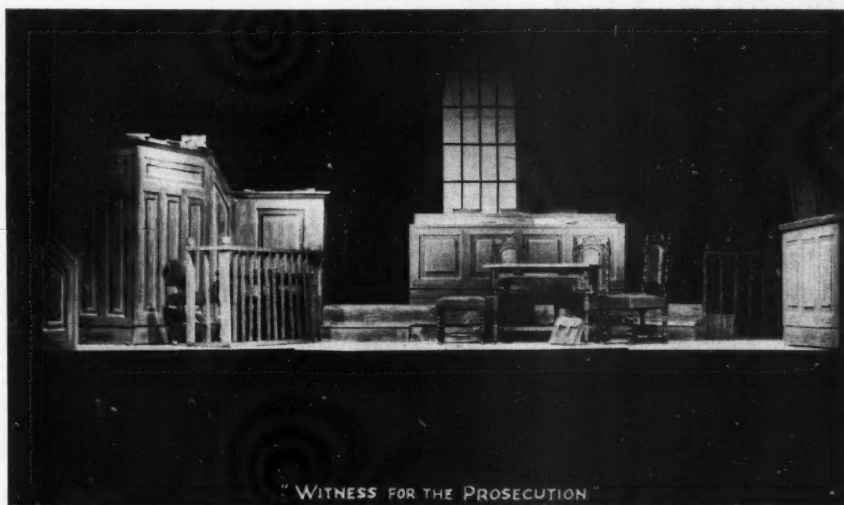
# Little Theater of Jacksonville

By CHARLES R. TRUMBO  
and POLLYANN

THE 40th Anniversary, an important milestone in anyone's life, was achieved by the Little Theater of Jacksonville this year. Their Fortieth Birthday party of Six Great Plays has been a most successful and gala event.

Jacksonville, once known as the gateway to Florida, is a port of entry and the county seat of Duval County. In 1816 the first group of people made their home near this "ford" of the majestic St. Johns River. Six years later the small settlement became a town and was formally named after Andrew Jackson. The city is now served by four railroads; coastal steamships and those which ply the "seven seas" daily enter and leave this beautiful inland port. By 1950 the population had reached 200,000 and continued to increase during the past decade. The major southeastern U.S. naval air station is twelve miles south of the city on the shore of the St. Johns River. Here also is the home base for Cecil Field, an auxiliary station, and the Mayport carrier basin.

The "passing years" had dimmed the details of the birth of Jacksonville's little theater. Mrs. Oscar G. Rawls, chairman of publicity for the 1950-51 season, did considerable research and ferreted out the story of this important event. A record of the early days was found in the writings of Gertrude Jacobi, one of its first and most active members,



Stage setting, designed by Maurice Geoffrey, for Little Theater of Jacksonville

The idea of a local theater seems to have been discussed by many people and several groups with no definite action being taken until Lee Guest, a civic-minded attorney who was president of Community Service, suggested the establishment of the Community Players. This was in 1920.

Community Service had been organized in Jacksonville the year before at the close of World War I to provide healthful entertainment for the thousands of men still quartered at Camp Joseph E. Johnston. When Camp Johnston was closed, there was less need for Community Service, and Mr. Guest suggested expanding it to include Community Players.

Formative plans were approved by Community Service in December of 1920 when Maude Francis, dramatic special-

ist, was engaged to stimulate local interest in dramatics. Among those who assisted in these original plans were Mr. and Mrs. E. R. Hoyt, Tracy L'Engle, Prof. and Mrs. William Meyer, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Guest, Capt. Basil Stephenson, Mrs. E. H. Emery, Frances Ewell, Mrs. J. B. Graves, Mrs. William Macklin, Martha Race, A. A. Silber, Mrs. W. B. Ford, Gertrude L'Engle, Elizabeth Long, Mr. and Mrs. J. Y. Wilson, Kathryn Wilson, W. H. Gordon, Josephine K. Maner, Mrs. Wellington Cumber, Ruth Rich, Biersa Shephard, Mr. and Mrs. Francis L'Engle, and Gertrude F. Jacobi.

The plan adopted called for plays or play readings every two weeks and promotion of community leagues for periodic production of plays. It was through the central Community Players and the neighborhood groups that the interest of hundreds of persons was stimulated in dramatics.

"Suppressed Desires" was the first play produced. This one-act comedy was presented in January, 1921, at the Women's Club, then located on East Duval Street. The next month, on February 4, Kathryn Wilson and Will Corder made their debut appearance in three one-act plays directed by Miss Francis. Both Miss Wilson and Mr. Corder later achieved successful Broadway careers. Will Corder was known as Blaine Corder. Wanda Hendrix became Jacksonville little theater's most noted professional when she went directly to Hollywood from the local amateur stage.

Despite the seemingly wide interest, the Community Players' first season was not a financial success. However, the second year was just the reverse. They paid off their \$400 deficit and still had a balance of same amount to open the following season.

Lacking a home of their own, the group led a nomadic existence. The Woman's Club was most used; but plays

(Continued on Page 31)





## HOLIDAYS IN MUSIC

By B. M. HOBGOOD



Frank Kivett played the title role in the popular Arnold Colbach-Billy Burke musical comedy, **Huck Finn**. Above he is shown making a tape recording of the ballad "Mary Jane," which can be used for radio, disc, and hi-fi. Rehearsing for a TV appearance which calls for Huck's character song "Civilization," Frank sings for the camera in an informal and easy style suited to television.

**E**NTERTAINMENT has a job to do. Its job is to amuse us, to provoke us, to divert us, to absorb us, and to move us deeply.

We ask entertainment to manufacture holidays upon demand, to provide a contrast with reality, to allow us to forget that one thing which is hardest of all things to forget—ourselves.

The simplest and at the same time the most affecting kind of entertainment is found in music. Its appeal is so strong to us that it hardly ever matters to know how very simple popular music actually is.

Imagine a beautiful woman rejected by her lover. He is a shiftless bum, yet she loves him the more for that. Let us see him through her fond eyes, which sadly admit he is nothing out of the ordinary. Let us hear her heart cry out that she doesn't understand why he is the only man in the world for her. But let her sing all this, so that we won't feel too embarrassed about her confession.

Making a song out of so sad a situation doesn't promise much in a bland description, but it's been done a thousand times. When it was successfully done, we had something like "Bill," by P. G. Wodehouse and Jerome Kern, who wrote the song for the musical *Show Boat*.

The appeal of popular music is explained by the intensity of human feeling and the conviction most of us have that we cannot express our feelings adequately. The popular song—easy to like, soon familiar, quick to recall—expresses those feelings for us quickly, painlessly, without the trouble of searching for our own words and without ostentation.

No one thinks a thing about it if a young fellow walks along whistling "Teen Angel." He may be thinking very wistfully of a teen angel, or he may not be thinking of anything but only feeling wistful. Whichever, the tune expresses this for him in a perfectly natural way so that he is not noticed but still expresses himself.

There is very little art in the making of popular songs and music. Art is made by the complete expression of a feeling or idea, and neither "Bill" nor "Teen Angel" begin to express completely the nature of the full feelings behind our desire to sing them or hear them sung. Nor do they pretend to be art, because they are only trying to express temporary feelings. The wistful whistler will soon forget his wistfulness in the grip of another mood.

That is why popular music is cast in traditional forms according to traditional methods. The methods are easy to comprehend.

*An appealing idea or sentiment is given a tune which follows the rise and fall of an expressive voice speaking that sentiment or idea.*

Take almost any "hit" song and examine the lyrics with this rule of thumb in mind, and the simplicity of the scheme is revealed. Doubters usually need no other proof than that furnished by listening to popular songs of other countries, for the French sing as they speak, the Italian's favorite songs reflect the volatile intonations of their language, and the Chinese or Japanese "hit" tune sounds to us so much like their speech that we can hear no melody.

The traditional forms are only slightly more elusive. The typical American popular song has thirty-two bars and is planned in four parts. The first part, or "A," is eight bars long and sets the basic idea or mood to a tune like expressive speech. The second part, or "B," repeats the same tune and thus its words must be very similar, if not the same, to those of the first part. In the third part, or "C," some songs continue with the same tune, but most will be set to words that express the feeling or mood in a different way. This makes the third part need a different tune, following the same rule; it is called the "vamp" or the "bridge." The fourth part, or "D," goes back and repeats the first tune with words which are again similar to the basic idea or mood.

When we look at this carefully, it becomes obvious that we actually have "A," "A," "C," and "A." Actually, musicians and lyricists call it the "AABA" form.

Just thinking about the repetition of the basic tune suggests that it should be pretty dull to hear the same thing three times. The repetition serves a purpose, however, in that it makes the song easy to remember. It becomes easy to like because it's pleasant to hear and no trouble to recall; but it is also easy to forget.

In performance the repetition is disguised by the variation the singer uses. The first two parts are sung fairly simply, but the third and different part must be given more drive because it isn't repeated; this leads to a more emotional rendition of the fourth part which repeats the "A" theme. With a new song the performer may sing through the whole thirty-two bars without much push; since common practice is to sing all the song and then let the orchestra play its version of the first two parts, the singer comes in again at the "vamp" with his most colorful interpretation of the number in order to bring his performance to a climax.



Another important factor in popular music, or any music, is the rhythm. The faster rhythms have a feeling of gaiety or briskness, and the slower rhythms give an effect of ease or solitude.

The rhythms in popular music are simple repetitions of a basic beat that seldom varies. Usually they are the 2/4 or "fox trot" and 4/4 or "square," or variations of these. There are also the "waltz" and "Latin" rhythms which are familiar, except that these differ by repeating a pattern instead of a beat.

The rhythm is chosen to express the mood of the lyrics as they appeal to the composer of the tune.

It isn't very difficult, as original musical shows across the country demonstrate every year. Tunes and lyrics in these locally written shows are just as good as those which are "hits," but the process of making a hit tune involves a great deal more than talent. Shrewd business management and the showmanship of knowing when the public wants to have this or that mood expressed has much more to do with it.

Two reactions to the recent variation on the basic patterns were interesting. A woman who is a teacher remarked that she was amazed at how much the rock 'n roll songs were like each other; the tunes didn't seem to matter anymore, she felt. A man who is a psychologist approached the subject differently by observing that the most unusual thing about young people today was their desire and capacity to hide their real emotional feelings behind a mask of indifference, which was clearly shown in the music they liked best.

Both missed the importance of the rhythm. The outstanding characteristic of rock 'n roll, which used to be called "rhythm and blues" in the music business, is the insistent, pounding beat. The beat makes everything else unimportant and projects a sense of trance, or sus-

pense in a high emotional state. The beat is so overwhelming that it takes the tune along with it, so that the tune becomes a monotonous pattern accompanying the beat instead of the other way around. The exception is the "vamp," when the vocalist has a high, excited, mounting theme to sing. This style was so favorably received that it affected many songs and arrangements of songs that were not rock 'n roll.

The type of show which employs popular music is known as musical comedy. Great changes have occurred in this form during the last thirty years. The musical comedy used to be nothing more than an outgrowth of the variety show, the main difference being that it pretended to have a plot. The plot, however, was only a device for stringing together a group of songs in different moods and rhythms. With the success of *Porgy and Bess* and *Oklahoma*, this changed. These shows made their plots important, and the songs even became part of the plot.

Mary Martin did not come down to the footlights and tell the audience in a soliloquy that she had made a mistake in her romance in *South Pacific*. Nor did Rodgers and Hammerstein bring on a friend for her to talk it over with so the audience would know how she felt. Instead she sang "I'm going to wash that man right out of my hair."

The general rule about songs in musicals is that they will sound best and often wonderful if they come at a point when it would seem unnatural for the character to express himself in words. He has to sing, as Larry Kert sang "Maria" in *West Side Story*.

The types of songs in musicals fall into groups. The most familiar group boasts the romantic ballad, whose job it is to say how much the lovers loved and why. The second group was introduced more recently and may be called "character songs"; their function is to

reveal what the person is like, as Forgy's "I got plenty o' nuttin'" does. Many of these never become popular, but they are usually the best songs in a show, musically speaking.

A third group is made up of "production numbers," which have the frank purpose of giving the show a sensation-ally colorful shot in the arm, and are usually staged with a singing and dancing chorus. Situation songs are the fourth type, and they set a mood or tell us of plot background. "Old Man River," "Summertime," and "Standing on the Corner" are examples of situation songs that had great appeal.

The favorite of musical comedy fans is the fifth kind of song, and it seldom becomes popular with people who haven't seen the entire show. It's the novelty number. Almost without exception comic, it is so dependent upon the plot that most people can't appreciate it unless they know what the lyrics are poking fun at. Robert Preston's rendition of "Trouble" convulsed the audience at *The Music Man*, but although it "stopped the show" in the theater it didn't catch on elsewhere.

Musicals also have a typical plot pattern, centering around a major romance, which is treated seriously. In *The King and I* this paired Anna and the King of Siam. The second romance is less important and is treated in contrast to the first, as Tuptim's tragic and youthful love affair was handled in this famous show. The third plot pattern provides the comedy in a serious drama, and this was given to the children in *The King and I*. Most musicals are leavened with considerable comedy throughout, and third plot is only broader comedy—as the reformation of the bums and sharks was shown in *Guys and Dolls*.

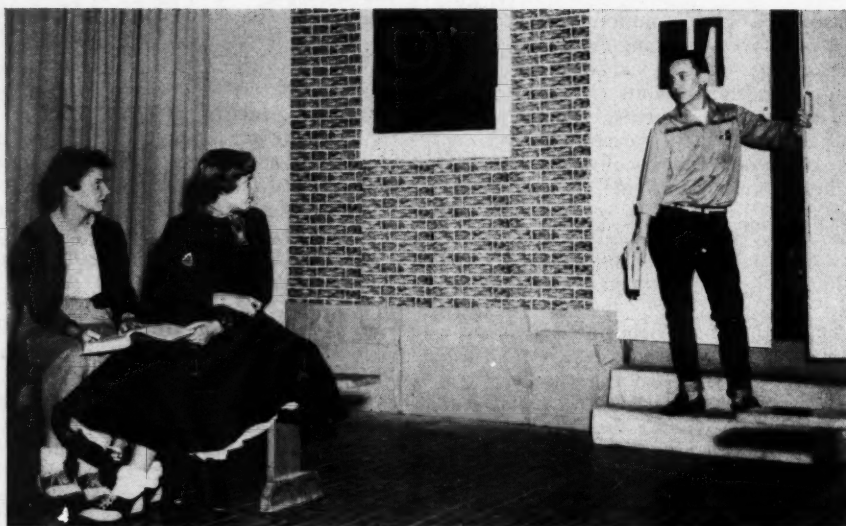
The musical comedy is said to be the most original form of entertainment

(Continued on Page 30)



Now playing **Huck Finn** on the full stage, Frank Kivett finds he has to exaggerate manner and project voice more strongly. The scene is of the Tom Sawyer gang, and the number is the novelty or show-stopping comedy song, "Write His Name in Blood!" in which Huck sees his friend Tom challenged to a fight. The picture is from the Blue Masque production of the musical at Catawba College.





New Boy in School, Troupe 682, Fairmount, Ind., High School, Adeline Nall, Sponsor

### BERNARDINE

Abilene, Texas, High School

MARY Chase's deft, star-flecked glimpse into the never-never land of teen-age males makes *Bernardine* an ideal play for the high school theater. It is peopled with flesh and blood boys, not conventional stereotypes; and it is an intelligent commentary on the gulf that separates the bewildered teen-ager from his equally bewildered parents.

Foremost in *Bernardine* are the gang, nice dead-end kids of good family, who hang around the Shamrock and talk about the problems of boys: school, girls, and even God. The focus of their problem is mother-ridden "Wormy" Weldy whose one desire is to be a winner, a big wheel with the fair sex. How he works out his problem makes for some hilarious and nostalgic theater.

The acting edition of the play offers an imaginative scheme for its staging: the boys shift the scenes as the story progresses. We added flown windows to localize the Shamrock, the Weldy home, the Barclay hotel. The telephone booth, the juke-box, sofas and ottoman whisked off and on the stage on wagons, casters, and glides. The wagon set for "Wormy's" date with a real life Bernardine we made symbolic with painted, glittered elegance and a frame of glass wool clouds.

The play presents a challenge to boys who must literally play themselves, and are too close to their stage counterparts for comfortable inspection. Enid, the older woman in "Wormy's" life, requires careful casting for the sake of the delicately beautiful key scene. But the play is easy to sell to your cast, your crew, and your audience with its easy flow of rowdy, boyish hi-jinks and good humor.

"Brisk and amusing," said the local drama critic; "A marvelous play for high schoolers to do," said a college speech head; "Try it yourself," say we!

ERNEST SUBLETT

Sponsor, Troupe 353

### NEW BOY IN SCHOOL

Fairmount, Indiana, High School

RETURNING to Fairmount High School in August, 1957, after a two years' leave-of-absence spent in New York City, I immediately faced the problem of choosing a junior class play. *New Boy in School* by Luella McMahon proved to be the answer to the dilemma.

Primarily, the basic philosophy impressed me. There is sympathy between students and faculty, parent and student, and especially between two brothers who carry the main interest of the plot.

The cast of eight men, nine women, and extras with excellent distribution of parts; the one set; the intelligent dialogue; the clever situations; and only twenty-five dollars royalty made this selection easy.

The mature characters as well as young roles were a challenge to Fairmount actors. A skillful stage manager created the outside of Keyes High School by papering the set with brick wall paper. However, we could have painted the set or have used drapes with a sign of the school's name over the door piece.

The language of the students typifies youth today with their ready comebacks. A teacher says, "...there is great satis-

## PLAYS OF THE MONTH

Edited By EARL BLANK

faction in building people." This I liked, for hadn't I returned to teaching after considering other work? All the dialogue is moving and natural.

The plot largely concerns Greg, a "star" fullback, who has come to Keyes but will not join the team because he knows that his younger brother Len will not be able to play due to a heart condition. Len, in his turn, sacrifices without any sugary sentimentality.

Of course, there is romantic interest; humor with enough dignity; several group scenes; and finally, the school dance which allows for pretty dresses and coats and ties. Altogether, we found our production of *New Boy in School* among the best junior plays we have ever done at Fairmount and heartily recommend it to other schools.

ADELINE NALL

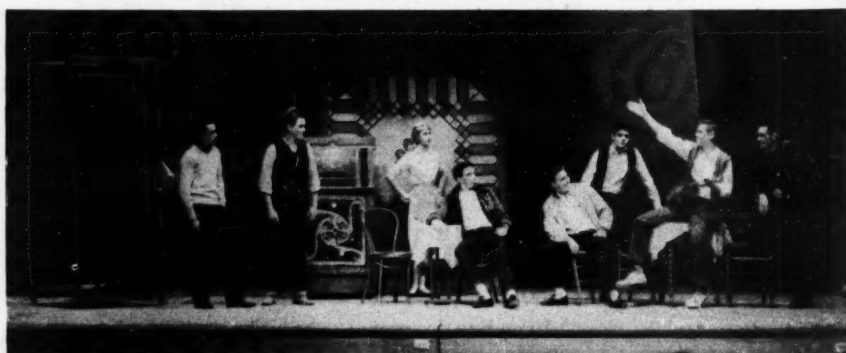
Sponsor, Troupe 682

### MURDER IN A NUNNERY

St. John H.S., Ashtabula, Ohio

WHEN murder occurs in an English convent boarding school and brings to the premises a stuffy inspector and a hard-boiled detective, all ordinary events become extraordinary and extraordinary events become unbelievable. The inspector, in his pursuit of justice, tangles with a wise mother superior, is "assisted" in his work by four lively boarders and eventually solves his case by mistake. *Murder in a Nunnery* provides a double plot of murder and intrigue and is well balanced with serious and humorous episodes blended together in fine taste.

As we contemplated the production of this play, we were delighted to find that it contained depth, emotion, humor and offered good roles to seventeen students. Our biggest problem was the fact that the play contains eleven scenes.



Bernardine, Troupe 353, Abilene, Texas, High School, Ernest Sublett, Sponsor



**BERNARDINE**  
**NEW BOY IN SCHOOL**  
**MURDER IN A NUNNERY**  
**BELLES ON THEIR TOES**

Such thoughts as backstage space for furniture, time consumed in changing sets, and the noise of frequent changes almost made us set the play aside. Trusting in our ingenuity we chose the play and started to work.

The first act consisted of five scenes. To keep the show moving we devised the following formula; Scene 1—full stage was used; scene 2—apron of the stage with just enough props to suggest the set; scene 3—full stage; scene 4—apron; scene 5—full stage. Alternating in this manner it was possible for the stage crew to change the major sets while a scene was being run on the apron. Time lost between scenes was almost zero.

The second act which takes place in the convent garden was handled very nicely by pulling the cyclorama and using the brick wall of the stage. This was given the appearance of the exterior of a chapel by the placement of paper stained glass windows and artificial ivy vines on the wall. This of course was in place throughout the entire play. Scene changes were taken care of very simply by pulling the cyclorama.

Costumers were simple. Modern dress was used and the nuns' habits were made out of white Indian head styled after the Dominican order.

*Murder in a Nunnery* was a pleasure to produce and as our audiences indicated, a pleasure to see. The cast offers a variety of roles and the lines are replete with meaning and a captivating strain of humor. The play will appeal to any audience, for our performances



**Belles on their Toes**, Troupe 173, Bellevue, Ohio, Central High School, Emily Sayles, Director

were given for parents, children, and nuns and each group enjoyed it from a different view-point.

SISTER GILMARY, H.H.M.  
 Sponsor, Troupe 188

**BELLES ON THEIR TOES**

Bellevue, Ohio, High School

**W**HY choose *Belles on Their Toes*?

Basically, it is a well-written play. There is something "big" in every act or scene, and the audience enjoys a careful building to each high point. The dialogue seems sleek, pared to its most interesting essentials, which was good for our beginners in dramatics.

The unforgettable aspect of this play's production was its unbounded warmth. There was an intangible something about the family in this play—call it a naturalness—that cast a glow over audience and actors.

*Belles on Their Toes* deals with the Gilbreth family of *Cheaper by the Dozen*. In this, the sequel, Mrs. Gilbreth, a widow, must go in her husband's place to a motion study conference in Europe. Upon leaving, she charges her ten older children to take care of each other and the house. The children then experience a number of really amusing mishaps, settled when the mother returns. Especially effective are scenes in which the children put motion study into housework or when they act as a family unit.

Students of smaller stature were cast to take roles of the younger children. There are several good character roles our actors especially liked portraying. Girls have major roles.

The most difficult problem encountered was costuming. Necessary to production, along with other clothing of the '20's, are old-fashioned bathing suits (several vintages) and a raccoon coat.

After reading and blocking the play, we found working on all acts from the beginning, rather than a long concentration upon each separate act, gave unity to the production. Personal rehearsals between the director and each individual

character helped establish characterization and smoothed rehearsals at which all were present.

We enjoyed producing this play; our only regret is that it will be a long time before another so perfectly suited play comes along.

EMILY SAYLES  
 Director, Troupe 173

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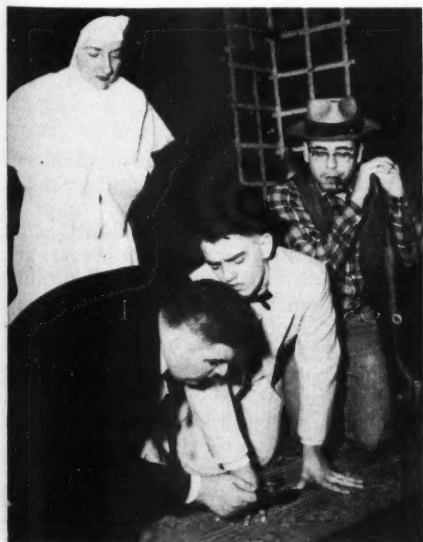
*New Boy in School*, *Belles on their Toes*,  
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**Murder in a Nunnery**, Troupe 188, St. John High School, Ashtabula, Ohio, Sister Gilmary, Sponsor



## THEATER



FOR

CHILDREN

FRIEDA E. REED

### THESPIAN CHILDREN'S THEATER GROWS

AS we come to the end of another school year, it is a good time to take stock of the progress of the area of Thespian activity reported in this column. Six years ago, it was not easy for the CT editor to find troupes who were producing Children's Theater. The reports of such activity to the national office in the annual account of plays produced were very sparse. One often felt that advocating the values and satisfactions of Children's Theater by high school students was like the proverbial crying in the wilderness. There were many sponsors who felt that their groups would think that such activity was "childish" and beneath their potentialities. In view of much of this negative attitude a few short years ago, it is encouraging and exciting to see how the list of Thespian troupes producing Children's Theater has grown. There are now more than 200 troupes reporting such work, and still more exciting is the



Simple Simon, Troupe 950, Omaha, Nebr., North High School, Margaret Nielsen, Sponsor

fact that of that number about thirty-five troupes report two or more CT productions in one year, some as many as five.

Encouraging as the growth in number of productions is, perhaps even more encouraging is the high quality of the scripts used for these productions. The titles of the plays produced represent the best of the children's classics. Many

of those troupes reporting indicate audience attendance numbering in the thousands of youngsters. Yes, progress is being made in one of the areas in which high school students are admirably suited to make their contributions to theater in the community. The enthusiasm of students and sponsors reporting their experiences should provide the necessary inspiration to other troupes to join the ranks of CT producers.

To underscore and emphasize these observations, we are citing the following account by Thespian State Director of Nebraska, Margaret A. Nielsen. In this report, Miss Nielsen tells a most interesting story of her experience with the production of *Simple Simon* by Troupe 950 of North High School, Omaha, Nebraska. The following is Miss Nielsen's account:

'Coco-a-Doodle-Do-o---'  
'The Queen is a tyrant!'  
'Heigh-ho to the Fair we go!'  
'Goo-ooze-berry pie.'  
'Here is Simple Simon,  
S-i-m-p-l-e-S-i-m-o-n'

"Echoes of that delightful children's play, *Simple Simon*, will long resound in the ears and the hearts of some ten thousand young theater-goers in Omaha, Nebraska. Furthermore, the cast and staff and director remember the production with equal warmth and enthusiasm.

"The idea of doing this show was conceived at Purdue in 1958, when the play was presented at the National Thespian Conference. As soon as the curtain fell on that charming production, this Troupe knew that it was the play they wanted. It became the show of the year.

"*Simple Simon* was done as a class project by the senior speech class. All forty students were in the cast, with the exception of the two student directors.

"Our *Simple Simon* was a small girl, a ballet dancer, by the lucky name of

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## RECOMMENDED PLAYS FOR CHILDREN

### Fairy-Tale Plays

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 Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves  
 Alice in Wonderland  
 Cinderella  
 The Elves and the Shoemaker  
 Jack and the Beanstalk  
 King Midas and the Golden Touch  
 Little Red Riding Hood  
 Peter Peter, Pumpkin Eater  
 Pinocchio  
 The Plain Princess  
 Prince Fairyfoot  
 The Princess and the Swineherd  
 The Puppet Prince  
 Puss in Boots  
 Rapunzel and the Witch  
 Rumpelstiltskin  
 Simple Simon  
 The Sleeping Beauty  
 Snow White and Rose Red  
 The Three Bears  
 The Wizard of Oz

### Modern Plays

Crazy Cricket Farm  
 The Ghost of Mr. Penny  
 Junket  
 Little Lee Bobo  
 Mr. Popper's Penguins  
 Mystery at the Old Fort  
 The Panda and the Spy  
 Seven Little Rebels

### Historical Plays

Arthur and the Magic Sword  
 Buffalo Bill  
 Daniel Boone  
 The Indian Captive  
 Marco Polo  
 The Prince and the Pauper  
 Young Hickory

### Plays of Popular Stories

Five Little Peppers  
 Hans Brinker and the Silver Skates  
 Hansel and Gretel  
 Heidi  
 Hiawatha  
 Huckleberry Finn  
 Little Women  
 The Nuremberg Stove  
 Oliver Twist  
 The Pied Piper of Hamelin  
 Rip Van Winkle  
 Robin Hood  
 Robinson Crusoe  
 The Sandalwood Box  
 Tom Sawyer  
 Treasure Island

### Fantasies

The Farmer and the Fox  
 Flibbertygibbet  
 The Good Witch of Boston  
 The Land of the Dragon  
 The Wonderful Tang

*The plays listed above will be found fully described and illustrated in our catalogue*

## THE CHILDREN'S THEATRE PRESS

CLOVERLOT, ANCHORAGE, KENTUCKY

Jo Janet. In the program, she was listed simply as Jo, and most of the Fifth and Sixth graders who saw the play took her to be a boy.

"The tyrant queen was big of voice and build, capable of making an entrance at first like a battle-ship to command attention, and of changing later to a very human monarch, capable of winning the love and loyalty of her subjects.

"The milquetoast king was rotund of face and figure, exceedingly flexible of facial expression, able to suggest a range of emotions from extreme pathos to sheer ecstasy.

"The executioner was enormous, even in his all-black costume. One front tooth had accidentally been knocked out a week before the production date. As a result, his occasional vicious grin as he lifted the axe became especially demoniacal. (Note: It is recommended that this toothless effect be achieved by black tooth enamel rather than by more drastic, realistic means!)

"While the casting was all easy and completely satisfying, the production was not so easy, and definitely challenging.

"A student committee made colored costume plates for all major parts and many of the extras. One of the student directors took charge of making the costumes, bought material, hired a professional seamstress to make five basic

costumes—for the King, Queen, Simon, Herald, and Pieman—cut similar patterns for all other costumes, and supervised their construction. The cost for all forty costumes was kept well below two hundred dollars. The committee was ingenious. Did you know that dyed nylons make exquisite filmy scarfs for tall, peaked hats?

"Art students in the class designed the set and supervised one art class in painting the scenery—two dimensional, gaily colored set pieces of walls and towers and flowered hedges. The jointed, oversized rooster was painted mostly gray and white to show off well as it perched on the 'stone' wall against the dark cyclorama. The magic tree was a two-dimensional cedar with a collapsible trunk of burlap, to allow its disappearance and re-appearance behind the wall. Other art students made the huge animal-head masks out of papier mache.

"There was a choreography-committee. Their dream sequence done in black light was especially charming. The costumes of Nightshirt, Child's Dress, and King's Underwear were all dipped in or painted with luminous paints of various colors. So was the enormous clothes basket out of which they arose. Simple Simon's special white costume (or rather that of his double) was dipped only in a strong solution of Tide to make it glow. The dancers chose their own recorded

music, one selection for each of the two moods.

"Other music which enhanced the play was provided by two music students, an offstage drummer and a trumpeter. They announced with fanfare each royal entrance and also accompanied the ensemble singing of 'Heigh-ho to the Fair We Go.'

"Most of Omaha's Fifth and Sixth Graders saw one of the nine performances and loved it. The rhythm of the songs and the goose-stepping soldiers, the vivid colors of the set and of the queen's changeable red-green nose, the humor of the waddling washerwoman, the excitement of Simon's awful predicament, the infinite variety of action and characters—all of these served to hold the rapt attention of the young audiences every minute of the production.

"AND, for a lesson in democracy and friendliness, the play is certainly ideal.

"Our Pieman, now in the Navy, expressed the enthusiasm of the whole cast. He had had the enviable(?) part of being pasted in the face with meringue (shaving cream) pie at each performance, and, as backstage man, of manipulating the jointed rooster to synchronize with the recorded cock-a-doodle-doo. Recently, he wrote with nostalgia to the director, 'How I wish we were just beginning rehearsals for *Simple Simon!* That play was really THE MOST.'



# Thespian Chatter

## TULSA, OKLA.

## Troupe 1167

Although Troupe 1167, Will Rogers High School, has not been in existence long enough to feel strongly the eternal pull of the past, we have established two traditions during our relatively short history which we believe are unique and might be of interest to other troupes. One of these is our Alumni Christmas Party. Because we enjoy keeping up with former high school Thespians who are now climbing the academic ladder in drama and other fields at various universities, each year we hold a Christmas Open House in their honor in the home of a currently active Thespian. Since nearly everybody makes it home for the holidays, a good number of former Thespians usually attend. All of us feel that gathering with them to loosen our tongues is a most entertaining and appropriate activity for that season when auld acquaintance should not be forgot.

Another tradition which might interest other troupes is the presentation of a special award to our "Most Altruistic Thespian." Our art department designs an original certificate which is presented to the Thespian who has given the most unselfish service to our dramatic activities, even though he may not have been in the spotlight enough to be named Honor Thespian. In acting well his part, whether it be in writing, producing, or directing, we feel that a Thespian contributes most when he serves where he can serve best. Such a person deserves the distinction of being named "Most Altruistic Thespian." — Paula Hughes, Vice-president

## PECATONICA, ILL.

## Troupe 1909

Small in size, but tremendous in curiosity, a grey theater mouse makes his rounds, absorbing every detail of the commotion caused by a group of hardworking high school students, and daubing paint here again.

The observant rodent concludes that they are preparing scenery for the senior play, *Gramercy Ghost*. Oops, one of those hurrying feet almost puts an end to our little friend. The mouse continues his survey of the activities until the lights are dimmed and the workers depart for home.

Exhausted he collapses in his bed and falls into a deep slumber interrupted by an unusual dream of the presentation of the play, *Ten Little Indians* dramatized by members of the junior class. The little animal suddenly awakens as if frightened by the dream. He reviews the dream and decides that it was the unusual lighting affects that disturbed his sleep.

Finding sleep again he dreams happily of the next day's activities, the installation of the Thespian chapter. — Daniel Uhlhorn, Sponsor.

## SALONICA, GREECE

## Troupe 1636

It was not easy for us to give our first English-language play, but we learned many things in working toward it.

Fifty boys from rural Greece who attend the American Farm School in Salonica are members of the Thespian Club which was first founded in our school in 1955 and is the only chapter in Greece. The other 150 are our audience and critics.

As we all know, the Americans have dedicated one day of the year to thank God and show their appreciation for the goods God gives us. This year we celebrated Thanksgiving, as we always do in our school, and we showed our appreciation to God with hymns and a play called "The First Thanksgiving Day," which we gave in English. Two of the persons who acted in the play had to be girls, but as our school is only for boys, we dressed up two of our boys and they played those parts.

We learned many things from our play, which helped us in our English and taught us some history, but the most important was that we learned that it is only right to take one day from the year's 365 to thank God for all He grants us. — Secretary

## BURLINGTON, VT.

## Troupe 1648

Both February 12 and 14 were reflected in Burlington High School's presentation of Irving Stone's *Love Is Eternal*, given, appropriately, in February. "Abe," having eluded hopeful

barbers for three months, had a head of hair that Lincoln himself might have admired. Of the 29-member cast, only Mary Todd played her role throughout the three acts.

In April the second act was cut to 40 minutes for the State One-Act Play Contest.

The Christmas Play, *The Man Who Found the King*, ended effectively when, at the miraculous touch of angels, a wall parted to reveal a tableau of the Holy Family.

More than 80 members of the Dramatic Club participated in our spring production, *Skits and Bits*. *Elmer* and *Seeds of Suspicion* were presented, then *Enchanted Isle*, a vaudeville show which allowed many participants to exhibit their talent for good humored buffoonery.

It was a big year for our club, which reached an all-time high in membership — 133. — Frani Nicholson, Historian.

## 1960 — REGIONAL CONFERENCES — 1961

### FLORIDA (Northern)

Place, not yet selected. Program Chairman, Ardath Pierce, Northern Florida Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 942, Duncan E. Fletcher High School, Jacksonville Beach, February 24, 25, 1961.

### ILLINOIS (Southern)

Belleville Twp. High School, Belleville, James Pleasant, Sponsor, Troupe 369, Program Chairman; Richard Claridge, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 733, East Alton-Wood River High School, Wood River, May 5.

### NEW YORK (Eastern)

Port Jefferson High School, Port Jefferson, Charles L. Jones, Regional Director and Sponsor, Ruth Becker, Co-sponsor, Troupe 861, May 14.

### NEW YORK (Western)

Drama Festival, State University of N. Y. Agricultural and Tech. Institute, Alfred, New York, Mort Clark, Program Chairman; Robert Timerson, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 1286, Trumansburg High School, May 4-8.

### OHIO (Northeast)

Harvey High School, Painesville, Janet Hamman, Sponsor, Troupe 664, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, State Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, November 5.

### OHIO (Southwestern)

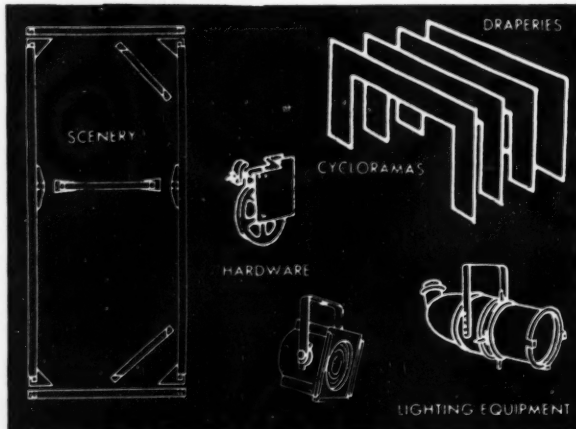
Talawanda High School, Oxford, Charles Williams, Sponsor, Troupe 1681, Program Chairman; Florence E. Hill, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 66, Lehman High School, Canton, November 12.

### CALIFORNIA (South)

University of Southern California, Los Angeles, Lewis Sheffield, Regional Director and Sponsor, Troupe 435, San Pedro Sr. High School, May 7.



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### WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS Troupe 1164

This is station N.T.S. reporting on the success of Troupe 1164 for the season 58-59. The forty-two members of this organization started their success story with the all time favorite of *Sleeping Beauty* for Children's Theatre. They followed this hit with their annual Christmas Pageant for their fellow classmates in high school.

After Christmas and its many pleasures, they settled down to work again on their big challenge. *The Defender*, a moving court-room drama, was a sensation. The audience was spell-bound and very impressed.

Then came the Senior Play, *Rosalie Runs Riot*. This play was full of fun, songs, and dances. Needless to say, it, too captivated a capacity crowd.

Besides these big productions, the members of Troupe 1164 have been extremely active in presenting programs for city clubs and organizations. Too, all of them entered in Inter-scholastic league speech contests. — *Alice Etter, Scribe.*

### MOBILE, ALABAMA Troupe 852

Hammers, piledrivers, riveting machines! All this surrounded us in the addition being made to our school. But "the show must go on!" So we presented our play; but equally as enjoyable as the presentation were the rehearsals for *The Patsy*, our full-length play for the year. A former Thespian, returning as an instructor, had a yen for creating more interest in dramatics among the freshmen, so a class in dramatics was formed among those students. This was good, for many showed signs of being interested Thespians. This group presented one-act plays large enough in casts to use every student.

The year's activities were climaxed by an afternoon outing at one of the youths' camps in the suburbs, election of officers having been held following the initiation of new members.

With the construction of an auditorium, we anticipate more projection of dramatics into the school's program. — *Lucy Witherspoon, Secretary.*

### MARION, KANSAS Troupe 610

One of the outstanding organizations in the Marion, Kansas, High School is the Thespian Society, Troupe 610. This has been another successful and enjoyable year. Twenty-seven Thespians produced *The Eve of St. Mark* by Maxwell Anderson in November. Additional script was written by some of the talented students in order that every member of the Troupe could be cast in the production. In December the Troupe worked with the music department and presented a *Winter Spectacular*. They used *Around the World in 80 Days* as the theme. Three one-act plays were given in February. *What's Wrong with the Girls?*, *Dress Reversal*, and the festival play, *Major Millhorn Reports* gave each Thespian a chance to perform again. The last two plays were given by all male casts. The festival play was given at the League Festival, the District Festival, and the State Festival. — *Sharon Propp, Secretary.*

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## HOLIDAYS

(Continued from Page 23)

America has contributed to the world. The most original form of music is thought to be jazz.

Jazz and all its offshoots — ragtime, swing, be-bop, progressive — reverses a process usually seen in popular music. For in popular music over the ages, the songs of high favoritism are forgotten in a generation or two, and the ones that are expressive enough to be remembered are passed down through informal performance as folk art. In "Greensleeves" we are hearing a once-popular hit of 16th Century England that was remembered in this way.

But jazz began as a folk expression of the Southern Negro, expressing either his exuberant happiness or his unhappy "blues." As in most popular music the way in which jazz is performed is more important than the song itself; the arrangement or style of performance makes the memorable experience.

While popular music generally stays in certain predictable molds which the public responds to, jazz re-introduced into music the phenomenon of improvisation. Taking a basically simple musical theme, each musician in a group interprets the theme to suit himself. The performance solo opportunity is passed around from one member of the group to another, those waiting for their turn to solo accompanying the soloist with improvised chords and variations. When all of them have played their idea of the basic theme, then they combine these ideas into a finale — the whole thing being held together by the rhythm section, traditionally a piano, guitar, and drums.

Because the music itself is not very remarkable, it has remained for such musicians as George Gershwin and Duke Ellington to base major musical compositions on the techniques of jazz. Serious musicians acknowledge the importance of jazz readily, although some resent its powerful expression of compelling emotion.

Entertainment is inescapable, and always has been in one way or another. It can be resented, disliked, scorned — but it will continue to exist. It will also continue to produce some of the greatest works of art human civilization can boast.

In concluding this survey of entertainment it is instructive to speak of the social importance of entertainment.

Entertainment seems to be satisfied only with popularity, but it has a serious function to perform as it achieves that. This function can be called *conditioning*, and it means that our entertainment forms help us to become a part of the society we live in. They prepare us to accept the norms, they make it attractive to conform. This is shown subtly in the more highly evolved types of entertainment, and is shown with striking clarity in the simpler forms, such as popular music. Since most of us are individual-

ists at heart, the attractiveness of identification with popular performers and ideas expressed in entertainment makes the process of conforming easier to accept. We are conditioned without realizing it.

Finally, entertainment reflects how we feel. The things we respond to most, and make into "smash hits," are not necessarily good examples of entertainment at its best. Many a performer knows that what he does best and what the public applauds most are not the same, but the performer gives the public what it applauds because he instinctively realizes that he is expressing for them the feelings they don't feel equipped to express. The warmth and sense of holiday that makes a memorable performance creates a sympathy and impulsive affection between audience and performer as a result. He is saying, singing, playing how we feel!

The performers who are most sensitive to this miraculous exchange of emotion between strangers need no explanation of why "the show must go on."

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DRAMATICS



## JACKSONVILLE

(Continued from Page 21)

were also staged at the Metropolitan Club on Riverside Avenue; the Playhouse, formerly the Hippodrome at Ocean and Beaver Streets; the Chamber of Commerce auditorium on Duval Street; the Morocco Temple; the Temple and Arcade Theaters; and later the newer Woman's Club on Riverside Avenue.

In 1926 the Community Players joined the national Little Theater movement and changed their name to coincide with this event.

At the end of seven-years-continued growth, Jacksonville's little theater had 600 members, and plans were made for erecting a \$40,000 building somewhere near the business district. Then the depression "slapped them in the face" and the plans were abandoned. By 1936 membership had fallen to 125 and there was talk of disbanding.

After two attempted meetings, without a quorum necessary to elect officers, Carl S. Swisher injected new life into the organization with his offer to give \$17,000 outright and lend an additional \$20,000 without interest toward building a theater, if and when the membership reached 700. A year later that number was realized, and construction was begun on the long-dreamed-of building. The group chose the San Marco business district on the southside of the river and only minutes away from downtown Jacksonville.

This was the inspiration needed to give the little theater the necessary impetus for rapid development. The new building was formally presented on January 18, 1938, with two performances of *Boy Meets Girl*. That season, the first in their own home, they presented six shows and several workshop and play-reading nights.

The following year four nights were needed for each production to be seen by their 1,300 members. With such phenomenal growth it required only seven years to repay Mr. Swisher's \$20,000 loan.

Student memberships were inaugurated during the 1938-39 season to encourage high school pupils to take an active interest in drama.

Summer school classes in acting technique, stagecraft, make-up, fencing, ballet, etc., were started in 1938. The theater began operating on a twelve month basis when a Children's and Youth Theater was organized in 1948-49 under a volunteer worker, Mrs. Charles D. Howorth.

The Little Theater continued to grow each year after moving into its own playhouse. One of the biggest forward steps was made during the 1943-44 season. Five regular performances of plays had been scheduled, but three extra ones were required for each show to fill the demand.

The next season the regular run was increased to eight performances. That was the year the popular plan of offering

reserved seats to members on selected nights was adopted. When the membership increased to 2,700 in 1949-50, nine regular performances were given.

In 1958 the new Children's Theater of Jacksonville was formed under the supervision of the Little Theater. Their first presentation was *The Clown Who Ran Away* by Conrad Seiler. Last year they presented *Princess Rose* by Elma Ilene Geoffrey.

The Little Theater has continued as a "community service" under its changed name. It has sponsored playwriting contests in schools and also play contests in high schools.

Several years ago Eddie Dowling, the prominent New York producer and actor, spoke at the Little Theater of Jacksonville. He cited the need for the encouragement of new writing talent for the legitimate theater. This subject became of great interest to H. K. Smith, Sr., an active member of the Little Theater. Because of this his son, H. K. Smith, Jr., later inaugurated the H. K. Smith, Sr., Memorial Playwright Award in memory of his father. Winning plays have been *Litter of Flowers* by Richard F. Stockton, *The Virgin Queen* by Harold Igo, and *Her Majesty Regrets* by Stephen J. Sanford.

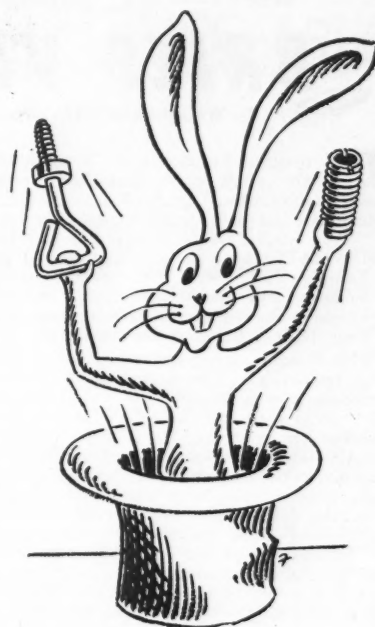
The Little Theater of Jacksonville is now under the capable direction of the Managing Director, Maurice Geoffrey. While still a child, Mr. Geoffrey decided to make show business "his" business. He began as a dancer, but always kept his eye on the ultimate goal of director. He worked to learn every phase of dramatics and the theater arts.

His years of apprenticeship proved to be a sound investment. He went to Jacksonville after twelve successful years at the Tampa Little Theater of Tampa, Florida. There he was both director and producer. In Tampa Mr. Geoffrey also directed the Tampa Junior League Children's Theater. In addition to all these he staged the fabulous, nationally-acclaimed Gasparilla Ball Pageant.

He was also a former production director for the Grove Players at Coconut Grove, Florida. For three summers he was managing director of the *Theater in the Sky* at Waynesville, North Carolina.

Mr. Geoffrey is a past president of the Florida Theater Conference. He currently is serving as State Representative for the Southeastern Theater Conference.

Jacksonville has one of the finest community theater plants in the entire country. The auditorium seats 332 persons, every seat having an excellent view of the stage with ideal acoustics. A large stage area with wagon stages, revolving stage and fly-loft make possible any type of production. The building includes an attractive Lobby and Green Room, a large rehearsal hall, dressing rooms with showers, a large workshop, extensive storage space, and a complete air-conditioning and heating system. The theater was completely redecorated for their 40th Anniversary Season.



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WRITE FOR CATALOG 59





# BRIEF VIEWS

By WILLARD FRIEDERICH



THE reviews this month are a continuation of the adult plays that have received previous professional production and that will also prove useful to young amateur groups.

**THE MATCHMAKER** by Thornton Wilder. French, 1957. 9M, 7W; Scene: theatrical backdrop and wing sets suggesting two living rooms, a hat shop, and a restaurant in the early 1880's. Royalty: On application.

This hilarious farce, reworked from a former play by Wilder (*The Merchant of Yonkers*), concerns a wealthy but stingy old merchant who decides to take a wife. He employs a matchmaker to arrange the deal, but dozens of complications arise from the escapades of his young clerks, his niece and her sweetheart, some fading ladies who run a hat shop, and even the head-waiter of a restaurant. After countless obstacles and reversals, three couples are formed out of the assorted mess of male and female adventurers, and the matchmaker herself succeeds in landing — and taming — the old merchant. Pure theater and pure fun.

**"HOWIE"** by Phoebe Ephron. French, 1959. 10M, 6W; Scene: a living room with a simple insert of a TV studio. Royalty: \$50-\$25.

A know-everything son-in-law who refuses to work at ordinary jobs for a living is the bane of the existence of his adoring wife's parents and sister. Although his wife gladly supports him and is terribly happy with him, her long-suffering family finally decide they must get both of them out of their house. They urge him to participate in a quiz program on TV, but, when he wins in a walk, he fouls up the situation by declaring his opponent was right and the judges wrong and by socking the emcee. Realizing that he can never be what the family wants — a routine, staid worker — he decides to join the navy and leave them all. At the last minute, however, the Civil Service offers him a job in a choice of far-away places, and the marriage is saved — as well as the sanity of the in-laws. Reminiscent of Kelly's *The Show-Off*, this play is without its bitter irony, retaining only the comedy and some of the three-dimensional characterization.

**THE BROOM AND GROOM** by Kurtz Gordon. French, 1958. 4M, 6W; Scene: a living room. Royalty: \$25-\$20.

A less sophisticated *Bell, Book and Candle*, this script is about a young bride, the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter of old Salem, who inherits the power of witchcraft. When she discovers the joys of traveling by broom (and disconcerts the army's radar system), her aunt, also "in the know," is persuaded by the husband to try to exorcise the demons. With the help of interested friends and the husband, the aunt succeeds — just as the husband awakes from a dream! This is a light bit of froth that makes for a pleasant evening of fun, if the old device used in the ending does not irritate too much.

**THE CAVE DWELLERS** by William Saroyan. French, 1958. 7M, 3W, extras; Scene: stage of an abandoned theater. Royalty: on application.

Saroyan's usual theme of love is again demonstrated in this less-than-realistic play about a group of underprivileged refugees who move into an abandoned theater as a shelter from the winter weather. Since the first comers are two old actors and a prize fighter, they decree that anyone else must be in the entertainment business to share their shelter. Eventually come a young girl and a family with a performing

bear, all accepted because their need is great. But progress is at work and the theater, long condemned, is slated for destruction to make way for a new building project. When the end comes, the refugees must venture forth once more into the cold world; but some of them have at least found love to help them buffet the storms of life. A semi-abstract dialogue with, at least, pseudo-philosophical overtones will not be easy for young actors, but the kind of bravura playing necessary for these unusual characters will be an invaluable experience for any serious actor.

**MR. MERGENTHWIRKER'S LOBBIES** by Nelson Bond. French, 1957. 9M, 3W, optional extras; Scene: a newspaper office and a neighborhood New York bar. Royalty: \$35.

A whimsical fantasy about a lovable little man who travels with two invisible companions who know the future and who passes it on to a newspaper man so that he can be prepared for future events and scoop the other papers. When the newspaper's favorite candidate for mayor is accused of murdering his secretary, the lobbies' knowledge helps to uncover the real culprit, the newspapers' photographer. While there is no problem about showing the lobbies to the audience — only the "pure in heart" can see them — there is the fascinating challenge of producing the trick effects that result from the actions of the invisible sprites: floating newspaper, moving furniture, etc. The bar scene, though perfectly in good taste, might be objectionable to some, but it can probably be softened for the squeamish.

**REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE** by James Fuller, from the movie and story of the same name. Dramatic Publishing Co., 1958. 13M, 10W, extras (some can be doubled); Scene: a space stage with a few furniture pieces to suggest the many changes of locale. Royalty: \$35-\$25-\$20.

Anyone who saw this stirring movie should be pleased at this faithful adaptation: the characters remain the same, as well as the situations and the emotional impact. Several young people, all products of a modern age in which "momism," adult delinquency, and social pressures combine to mold rebels who do not really understand their "cause," are caught in the trap of uncertainty and despair. Their own frantic efforts to escape the trap result in clashes with the law and even death; but, except for a concerned social worker who is almost fighting a lost cause, no one offers them a better solution until their mistakes are irrevocably made. In the end, however, some progress is evident: one of them goes for psychiatric care, one makes his father realize his deficiencies and responsibilities, and two of them find the love they need in each other rather than in their families. This is an adult analysis of juvenile problems that packs a real wallop and should be a real challenge to a teen-age cast.

**THUNDER ON SYCAMORE STREET** by Kristin Sergel, from the TV drama by Reginald Rose. Dramatic Publishing Co., 1958. 8M, 10W, extras; Scene: three living rooms and the street — all suggested by a few set pieces. Royalty: \$35.

The sin of prejudice, without understanding or knowing the real facts of a case, is explored in this story of a quiet, respectable street of people that decide to run an ex-convict and his family out of their neighborhood. Only the young teen-agers of the families and one of the men, branded a coward by the other "brave" ones, realize the wrong that is being planned; but even they do not have the courage to stop it until the mob is actually beating at the man's door and beginning to get dangerous. As they all slink off in shame, the crisis is past; but the street will never be the same again, for all have looked deeply into themselves and each other and now there is no way of pretending that it didn't happen. A powerful play, with fine characterization and theme.

**THE FIVE-DOLLAR BILL** by Tad Mosel. Dramatic Publishing Co., 1958. 6M, 6W; Scene: the yard, living room, and bedroom of a summer cottage. Royalty: \$25.

An unusually sensitive and adult treatment of a frustrated teen-ager and his even more frustrated parents, this play gradually reveals the tensions that have arisen because a father has always unconsciously favored his older son, the athletic extroverted type, over the younger son, the more quiet thoughtful type. When the latter steals \$5. from his mother's purse for no particular reason except that he felt impelled to do it, the parents realize that something has been wrong in the family atmosphere. At last the father begins to see that his militaristic organization of the family springs from his rejection as a soldier in the war and that his reluctance to appreciate his son's interest in literature is based on his lack of understanding of it; but even this is not enough to help him understand his son fully. Yet, at the end, the two have reached a better level of companionship merely through the act of accepting each other on faith without actually fully comprehending the other's point of view. And when the father calls the boy Ralph instead of the customary Ralphie, the boy responds by calling the father Dad instead of the old nickname Major. This is no pat resolution of a long-standing problem, of course, but it does reasonably imply the beginning of one. The set may be more suggestive than realistically complete, but the three locales must be shown at once in order to handle the simultaneous action often called for.

**THE SPA** by Edward Chodorov, after a play by Ferenc Molnar. Dramatists Play Service, 1957. 6M, 3W; Scene: the lounge of a resort hotel in Austria. Royalty: on application.

Molnar's familiar sophisticated and farcical touch is well preserved in this adaptation of the story of the horror that permeates the family of the chief minister to the Emperor of Austria when their daughter falls in love with a mere captain in the Hungarian Hussars. The mother demands a clean break, but then is informed that the girl has induced her father to recommend the dashing soldier for the post of riding master to the Emperor's daughter. To make matters even worse, the secret police discover that the man is an international gambler and con man. After countless twists and turns of events, the young people separate, but the captain suggests that they meet in Vienna later and take in some of the underworld sights. The curtain falls with the butler, who adores his young mistress, promising to help her in arranging the escapade. The honor of the family has been saved, but there is pretty definite indication that the future of the young princess and her captain has not yet been decided. An adult, brittle high comedy of manners that requires real style in playing.

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